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opposed by a gentleman of distinguished legal attainments and extensive talents. The result, however, was not in favor of Mr. Folk, but he was not the hearts of his constituents to be successfully opposed.

He continued to be re-elected with little or no opposition in 1833, when he was subjected to another arduous and fatiguing campaign as a member of the Committee of Ways and Means. Mr. Folk had made a minor report to the House of Representatives against the United States Bank as a depository of the public revenue. He reported he had exposed the precarious condition of the institution, particularly in connection with the operations of its western branches. In the spring of 1833 he announced himself a candidate for re-election, and went to the western portion of the State on private business. In his absence one of the newspapers at St. Louis published an article containing a gross and untrue credit in his report to Congress. The charge scattered indistinctly throughout his district, and his feeling of indignation was aroused against him. The charge was made with so much confidence, and with so much feeling and plausibility, that the discontent swept over the district, and his final prostration became inevitable. In the midst of the excitement two men of distinguished abilities and great popularity were candidates in opposition to him. Some of his friends, who were of the opinion that he would retain his seat, felt that he would make his vindication against the

on the first day of the April circuit court at Coates. The announcement brought together an increased from all quarters of the district. The speaker, in his strength of mind and until the crowd seemed to be animated with one feeling of emotion. At the appointed hour Mr. Pettibone rose. He met the cheering with boldness, maintained the force of his logic, vindicated the rights of the oppressed, and denounced with crashing power the injustice done by his assailants. The appeal made by him to his friends and constituents was irresistible; it was a question of the heart; and it met a responsive sympathy in every bosom. Tears were joyfully shed as the cause of his old supporters, while the countenances of the whole audience were bright with gladness. Indication was complete, his triumph was signal, the tide of popular indignation was rolled back upon its source. To two Congresses he had been elected, and he was elected a third time, but the struggle was in vain; he was repudiated by an overwhelming majority. From this time he voluntarily retired from Congress in 1839 he had no further opposition.

After the failure of the congressional services of Mr. Pettibone, it would require a complete review of the entire administration of John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson and two years of Mr. Van Buren's term. During all this period he was active, and during much of it he was a prominent participant in the legislation and management of all the great questions which engaged the attention of Congress. To review these at full length

be the work of the historian; it will be sufficient merely to glance at some of the most important of these questions, so as to exhibit Mr. Polk in his true form.

With the accession of Mr. Adams to the presidency, spirit of party, which had slumbered during the administration of Mr. Monroe, was again awakened, and the two great parties of the country began to rejoin the deliberations of Congress. The exceptional character of Mr. Adams's election, as well as the character of the doctrines promulgated in his first annual message, caused the new party division which followed his election. The two great parties took issue in opposition to administration, and during its whole term was an ardent, vigorous, and efficient opponent. He regarded the election of Mr. Adams as a defeat of the popular will, and to avoid similar occurrences in the future, as a necessary condition of the constitution, that the election of President and Vice President should be made directly of the people. His speech on this question was among the best made by him in Congress; and although he was probably once or twice defeated, the strongest men of the day in his effort will not be found. He was one of those of the oldest and most talented members who took in the discussion. The fundamental principles at government were involved in the proposition. The speech of Mr. Polk will show that he had been understanding in deep research into the origin and history of constitution, in profound, statesman-like views of the true powers of the different departments of the gov-

and in powerful arguments in favor of giving equal weight to the views of the people. His contributions in regard to the celebrated Panama mission, the right of the House of Representatives to the supplies for carrying out a treaty made by the Executive and Senate, took place. The investigation of the question of the removal of the Hawaiian Islands involved principles of international and constitutional law, which were of the most difficult solution. Polk took a prominent part in this investigation and decision. By his efforts on these questions, he has secured for himself the honor of being a leader in character for profound abilities. This was manifested at the commencement of the next Congress by his appointment as chairman of the important Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Most of the questions which became the subjects of the party contest during the administration of Jackson had originated or been subjects of discussion during the administration of Mr. Adams. This is especially true as to the power of Congress to appropriate money for the purchase of foreign territory, and to impose tariff duties, for the purpose of protecting and building up domestic manufactures. Both of these subjects were favored by Mr. Adams, and both received the sanction of Congress during his administration. It was, together with the question of the removal of the Hawaiian Islands, the question which the Democrats contended the leading subjects of public excitement during the administration of Gen. Jackson. On these questions, Mr. Polk's position was distinctly

ness during the administration of Mr. Adams in 1829. The position of the administration was based in so small a measure upon what he regarded the consolidating tendency of the power yielded to Congress by Mr. Adams in regard to internal improvement, whilst he regarded a course of high protective duties as necessarily unjust to the people, and the consequent injury to the country. The question of re-chartering the Bank of the United States did not arise during Mr. Adams's administration, and therefore Mr. Polk, in his official capacity, did not take his position on this subject until the inauguration of General Jackson. He was, however, within my own knowledge, that before Gen. Jackson communicated any message to Congress, and before re-charter of the bank was agitated in the public mind, Mr. Polk had been called on, through the press, to take a position on the subject. He was, in relation to the charter of the bank, both upon grounds of expediency and constitutionality. It is therefore true, and it is due to the memory of the dead that the truth be distinctly stated, that on all the leading measures of Mr. Polk's administration, including the re-chartering of the bank, he was so eminent and so efficient, he was maintaining his own principles, taken in advance of their being brought forward by Gen. Jackson.

Gen. Jackson entered upon the discharge of his executive duties with a profound conviction that the permanent prosperity and the permanent greatness of the nation depended upon the maintenance of the principle of reformation of the existing administrative policy of government. His great mind, which comprehended

most momentous subjects at a glance, and arrive at conclusions almost by intuition. They are highly original, and their views are not only in full operation, would ultimately result in the complete overthrow of the substantial principles of representative freedom, bringing standing but the mere name and forms of a splendid structure of representative government. But the Government of the States, the construction of whose internal improvements in the States by the general Government, and the imposition of tariff duties for the protection of domestic manufactures, as three measures intimately connected as to constitute one grand system, which it is intended to say the least, will be a catastrophe, and end in disaster and ruin. Whether his views are correct or not, it is not now necessary or proper to examine. He entertained them strongly and honestly, and he felt it to be his solemn duty to carry them out, and he has done so. His views, however, were a mistake, involved no less than a total revolution in the actual policy of the government. That policy was so intimately connected with the commercial and monetary interests of the country, that the contemplated revolution would have involved the ruin of the country, and a vast influential and numerous portion of the community. Undoubtedly fully the magnitude of the reforms proposed, and of the obstacles to their execution, it must be remembered that the whole surface of the country was required to be prepared for the construction of the main lines of the construction of which the general government was expected to provide the means. It is impossible even

conjecture the amount of individual interests threatened in favor of the system. When I state to you that the estimated cost of the various projects, which had reversed the virtual auction of the government, was over a hundred millions of dollars, you will at once discover that hundreds of thousands of individuals must have been flattered with pleasing visions of increased wealth to be derived from the immense amounts of public